

# Brown or blackouts predicted

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Donna Milakovic - NORTH COUNTY STAFF

As some Eagle Mountain residents protest a plan to put power poles in their front yards, officials say the city faces brownouts or blackouts if a new power line is not installed soon.

"We are experiencing lower voltage than we should be," said city administrator John Hendrickson, noting brownouts or blackouts will happen if the city waits much longer to install a high power line in the southeast part of the city.

Residents protesting the city's intended pathway for the 138 kV line were to have met with city and state officials today to negotiate reasonable appraisals on the properties affected.

Landowners appeared at a City Council meeting on Nov. 20 to protest the plan to put the line in their front yards. They asked the city to purchase two homes on the west side of Lake Mountain Road in order to run the power line along the existing Rocky Mountain Power corridor there.

Adam Ferre, public works coordinator, said the city is looking one more time at alternatives, but the environmental study for the entire corridor took six months and would be too costly and lengthy to do again.

"We don't want to destroy any houses," Ferre said.

City Attorney Jerry Kinghorn said that the city has been studying this since 2000, trying to find a way to build the power line in a way that involves the fewest number of people and the least amount of property. The city understands the impact on those affected by the lines, he said.

The power line plans call for the line to run along the east side of Lake Mountain Road and cross the front of the properties for minimal impact. However in the case of Kim and Karen O'Donnell who have a west facing home, the proposed line cuts in front of their living room window and the plans call for a 60 to 90 foot wood pole to be placed in the middle of their front yard.

The O'Donnells operate an animal rescue center on their five-acre property and said the power lines could be a health hazard for their animals.

"We will be devastated by this project," said Kim O'Donnell when he addressed the City council. "All our equity is gone just like that. It is ludicrous and it is insane and we oppose it."

"It isn't about the money, this is our lives," said James Taylor, whose property is located in the path of the proposed power line.

All the residents interviewed concerning the project said the only fair thing to do is buy the homes across the street, one of which is for sale, and keep the power line in its intended path.

Michelle Clark moved into the home across the street from the O'Donnells last January. She said the high-voltage line in their backyard often shocks them, especially if they touch something metal. She said she only found out about the planned power line a few days ago from the O'Donnells and that no one from the city has contacted her even though the pole would be feet from her home and would sandwich her home between two high-voltage lines.

"I would not want to live here if that is the case," she said. She said she has no idea how to protest the city's proposal.